

REMARKS

IN THE DRAWINGS

The Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR §1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference signs mentioned in the description: 46, 48, 50, 52, and 54. The drawings have been amended as described above. In particular, element numbers 46, 48, 50, 52, and 54 have been added to Figure 5. These changes are incorporated into the drawing without any markings. No changes were made to Figs. 8 or 9. Applicant submits no new matter has been added. The element numbers missing from Figure 5 were adequately described in the specification (see, e.g., page 6, lines 13-26). Applicant submits in light of the drawing amendments made herein this rejection should be withdrawn. Replacement Figure 4 is submitted to properly indicate the keel, reference number 20, as mentioned in the specification (see, e.g., page 4, lines 15-20).

IN THE CLAIMS

The present Amendment responds to the Office Action mailed March 28, 2003. In this Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, objected to some of the drawings, and rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated. In light of the Amendments above and the Remarks below, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's actions and requests reconsideration.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112 as reciting "wear strip" without proper antecedent basis. Claim 15 has been amended to depend from claim 12 instead of claim 11. Claim 12 provides proper antecedent basis for "wear strip" in claim 15. Claims 16 and 18 have been amended to provide proper antecedent basis for "wear strip" in claim 18. The reference to "wear strip" in claim 16 has been deleted. Claim 18 has been amended to provide proper antecedent basis. Applicant submits in light of the amendments to claims 15 and 18 herein, this rejection should be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, the Examiner also rejected claims 1-22 under §102(e) as being anticipated by Lachance (U.S. Pat. No. 6,520,512). Since the rejection is under §102(e), Applicant reserves the right to swear behind Lachance via an affidavit under 37 CFR §1.131. However, Applicant prefers to instead distinguish Lachance. Based on the amendments herein

and the arguments provided below, Applicant respectfully disagrees with this rejection and requests reconsideration.

Claim 1 as amended recites "surfaces facing the skag inside surfaces do not extend laterally toward the inside surfaces." By contrast, Lachance discloses a carbide bar having surfaces facing the wings (to the extent wings constitute skags) inside surfaces, which extend laterally toward the wings inside surfaces. Support for the above-noted recitation is found at Figure 4 in the Lachance specification. This feature in Applicant's claimed invention defines a channel preventing pebbles or other debris from becoming lodged in the channel. Claim 1 as amended is, therefore, patentably distinguishable from Lachance.

Claims 2-10 are dependent from allowable base claim 1. Therefore, claims 2-10 are also patentably distinguishable from Lachance.

A similar argument can be made for claim 19; therefore, claim 19 is patentably distinguishable from Lachance. Further, claims 20-22 are dependent from allowable base claim 19. Therefore, claims 20-22 are patentably distinguishable from Lachance.

Claim 16 as amended recites "the skags having a length of between about 13/45 and 16/40 of the runner length". By contrast, Lachance discloses a stabiliser 22 starting on the rear end, just before the curved part 24, and stretches to the front end 26 of the ski 20, just before a strong curve 28. Support for the above-noted recitation is found at Column 2, lines 2-5 in the Lachance specification. This feature in Applicant's claimed invention defines a limited length skags providing better turning and cornering. Claim 16 as amended is, therefore, patentably distinguishable from Lachance.

Claims 17-18 are dependent from allowable base claim 16. Therefore, claims 17-18 are also patentably distinguishable from Lachance.

Lachance does not disclose the invention of at least claim 11, including the limitation "the upper outside edges each skag being aligned laterally with the respective lower side edge of the keel." Referring to Figures 4 and 5 of Lachance, it discloses a center channel 30 much narrower than the upper outside edge of the U-shaped section 36 of stabilizer 22. To the extent the bottom of center channel 30 constitutes a keel and to the extent U-shaped section 36 of stabilizer 22 has upper outside edges of two skags, these edges are not laterally aligned. This feature in Applicant's claimed invention defines a type of extended keel providing better turning and cornering.

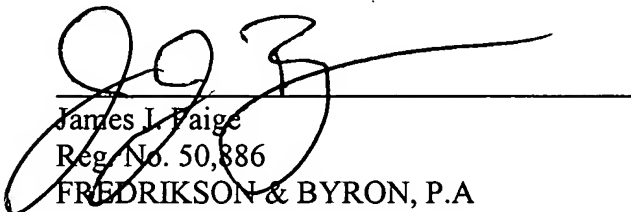
Accordingly, Applicant believes the rejection of at least claim 11 as being anticipated by Lachance should be withdrawn. Since claims 12 – 15 depend from claim 11 (either directly or indirectly), the rejections to these claims should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons for claim 11.

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits each of claims 1-22 are in condition for allowance. As these are the only claims pending in the application, prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance in this case is courteously solicited.

Please treat any communication filed at any time in this application, requiring a Petition for an Extension of Time Under 37 CFR 1.136(a) towards timely submission as incorporating a proper petition for an extension of the appropriate length of time. If any additional fees are required to enter the present amendment, Applicant hereby authorizes the Office to charge our deposit account, Deposit Account No. 061910. If the Examiner feels prosecution of the present application can be materially advanced by a telephonic interview, the undersigned would welcome a call at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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